Meiassis Dragon

Newsletter of the Barony of Dragonsspine

January, A.S. XLVII (MMXIII Gregorian)

Meiassis Dragon
January, A.S. XLVII

Contents:

About the Cover	2
About This Issue	
Populace Contributions	
Baronial Court of Dragonsspine	3
Dragonsspine Retinue and Guard	
Baronial Champions	
Dragonsspine Baronial Officers	4
February Calendar	5
Upcoming Events	
Words from the Baron and Baroness	6
This Month in Medieval History	7
Did You Know...?	
Making a Wooden Toy Viking Horse by Wilhelm Meis	8
Chivalry in the Middle Ages: The Song of Roland	10

About the cover: Theosophische Darstellung zur Alchemie (Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek - Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, Signatur/Inventar-Nr.: Chem.360). This copperplate print by Hermann von Sand was published in 1678. This image is in the Public Domain because it is more than 100 years old. Image source: http://www.deutschefotothek.de/obj88967136.html

About this issue: Sadly, the time has come for the office of the Chronicler to pass on to the next keeper of the chronicles of Dragonsspine. This special issue, compiled and edited by Wilhelm Meis, is a demonstration of his skills in this capacity, but the office is still open to all applicants. Please contact the Seneschal to review or critique this issue or to apply for the office.

Populace contributions: This newsletter depends on contributions from the populace of Dragonsspine for much of its content. We are proud to run several regular features, but these depend entirely on the contributions of populace members. We encourage all members of the populace to contribute features, articles, cover art and other creative works for inclusion in future issues of the Meiassis Dragon. Please direct these content submissions to chronicler@dragonsspine.org and be sure to include a completed Grant of Use form (see http://sca.org/docs/library.html#releaseforms).

Baronial Court of Dragonsspine
Baron and Baroness:
Herbert von Kalden baron@dragonsspine.org
Keterlyn von Eltz baroness@dragonsspine.org
(mka Bert & Kate Flather) 719-264-0454
No calls after 9:00 PM MT, please.

Dragonsspine Retinue and Guard
Heavy Guard:
Lord Broddi hornabrjótr, Captain
Lord Sixtus Goetz
Lord Wilhelm Meis
Master Thorsinn Vandringsmann
Collin

Rapier Guard:
Don Trevor MacRae, Captain
Doña Alexandria Morgan
Lord Anton du Vallier
Lord Conall Mac an Druaidh

Archery Guard:
Countess Eórann O'Connor, Captain
THL Lêofsige Õ Caoimh (aka Lyssa)
Sander von Zeitz

Ladies-in-Waiting:
Lady Zaahira de la Sara, Head Lady in Waiting
Amicia de Braci
Sofie von Schönburg

Baroness's Companions:
Duchess Cainnleach Uliseir of Glendalough
Mistress Mary of Lyonshall

Court Herald:
THL Kiara Loftus

Baronial Champions

Warlord: Count Giovanni di Sienna
Defender: Don Trevor MacRae
A&S Champion: Mistress Lydia of the Pines
Ranger: Master Duncan Alastair MacRae
Shield of Honor: Lord Gaius Felix Aurelianus (aka Fell)
Bard: Lord Gaius Felix Aurelianus (aka Fell)

Dragonsspine Baronial Officers

Seneschal seneschal@dragonsspine.org	Master Duncan Alastair MacRae Event Deputy: Lady Zaahira
Exchequer reeve@dragonsspine.org	Lord Cullen MacBride Deputy: Lady Ceara MacAlee
Knight Marshal marshal@dragonsspine.org	Herr Sixtus Goetz
Rapier Marshal rapier@dragonsspine.org	Lord Gianni Sangermano
Archery Captain archery@dragonsspine.org	Countess Eorann O'Connor Deputies: Lady Aicelina de Navarra Lord Tiberius Aicilius Brutus (Thrown Weapons)
Minister of Arts & Sciences arts@dragonsspine.org	THL Bronwen of Hindscroft
Scalene Pursuivant herald@dragonsspine.org	Duchess Selene of the Sky Deputies: THL Kiara Loftus (Court) Ld Wilhelm Meis (Consultation)
Chatelaine newcomers@dragonsspine.org	Lady Beatrix of Ambleside Gold Key: VACANT - Contact the Seneschal to apply!
Quartermaster quartermaster@dragonsspine.org	Sir Alaric Dimitrievich Razvedchikov
Chronicler chronicler@dragonsspine.org	VACANT Contact the Seneschal to apply!
Minister of the Web web@dragonsspine.org	Fear Ruithe Deputy: Elric Thurstonsen
Scribe scribe@dragonsspine.org	THL Aildhieinna MacAilpein
Minister of the Lists mol@dragonsspine.org	Antoine Francesco

Please notify the Chronicler of corrections/changes to this list at: chronicler@dragonsspine.org.

February Calendar

February 2013						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Winter Feast 12-8P Sons of Norway Lodge ♔ ⩍
3 Archery Practice 2:00-4:00P Sir Ton's Fields Black Forest	4 Populace Meeting 7-9P Penrose Library Carnegie Room	5	6	7 Fight Practice A&S Night 6-9P Globe Charter School	8	9 Stag's Con (Al Barran) ♔ ⩍
10 Archery Practice 2:00-4:00P Sir Ton's Fields Black Forest	11	12	13 Dance Practice 6:30-8:30P Co Springs City Auditorium	14 Fight Practice A&S Night 6-9P Globe Charter School	15	16 Corazon De Leon (Villaleon) ♔
17 Archery Practice 2:00-4:00P Queen's Prize (Villaleon) ♔	18	19	20	21 Fight Practice A&S Night 6-9P Globe Charter School	22	23
24 Archery Practice 2:00-4:00P Sir Ton's Fields Black Forest	25	26	27 Dance Practice 6:30-8:30P Co Springs City Auditorium ESTRELLA ♔ ⩍	28 Fight Practice A&S Night 6-9P Globe Charter School ESTRELLA ♔ ⩍		

Local events/activities Events outside the barony ♔ Outlands Royal presence ⩍ Dragonsspine Baronial presence

Upcoming Events

Winter Feast

Lords and Ladies of the Outlands, the Baron and Baroness of Dragonsspine invite you to come enjoy a Winter Feast. There will be a bardic competition during the feast, and the Staff of Dragonsspine's Bard will be passed on to the next Baronial Bard. There will also be a competition for the best winter-themed table, and there will be dancing after feast and court.

Saturday, February 2nd , 2013 Site opens: 12 pm We must be off site by: 8 pm

Site fees: $10

Age 0-6 - FREE

Feast fee $5

$5.00 non-member surcharge

Sons of Norway Lodge
1045 Ford Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80915
click here for map

Site is wet but alcohol must be purchased at the hall

Make checks payable to:
SCA-Barony of Dragonsspine

Autocrat: Cullain mac Bryde (mka: Jonathon Stevens)
Send reservations & correspondence to:
SCA Dragonsspine, P.O. Box 374
Colorado Springs, CO 80901
Phone: (719) 375 -1713
Email: thekingsauldwolf@yahoo.com

Directions:

From the North- Take I-25 south to exit 153, Interquest Parkway.
Stay on Interquest Parkway for 1.9 miles. Turn Right on to CO-21, Powers
Follow Powers 11.9 miles to Galley. Turn Left on Galley.
In 1/2 mile turn left onto Ford Street. The hall is on the right.

From the South- Take I-25 north to exit 139, US-24 E. toward Limon
Turn Left onto Powers. Stay on Power for 2.9 miles to Galley
Turn Right on Galley.
In 1/2 mile turn Left onto Ford Street. The hall is on the right.

Words from the Baron and Baroness
Greetings unto our fair populace!

We hope these letters find you well and enjoying the feast season. Herbert had a blast at Caerthan 12th Night! We also look forward to having a wonderful day at Dragonsspine's Winter Feast at the Sons of Norway Hall on the 2nd of February 2013. The dancing and feasting will relax us as we prepare for Estrella War! Please come and enjoy a wonderful repast with us!

We also offer congratulations and thanks for those who are filling officer positions within the Barony. With the sad news of the upcoming departure of Don Trevor MacRea we sought worthy replacements for the position of Knights Marshal and Rapier Marshal. After consultation with the Baronial Seneschal, Herr Sixtus Goetz has been selected to serve as Knights Marshal and Lord Gianni Sangermano has been selected as the next Rapier Marshal. We are also pleased to announce that Sir Alaric Dimitrievich Razvedchikov has volunteered to return to the position of Quartermaster. Many thanks to all of these good gentles for their service to the Barony!

As previously announced we are seeking a new Chronicler for the Barony. Each candidate will prepare a monthly newsletter submission as a demonstration for the position of Chronicler. We will review the newsletter based on content, layout, timeliness, and general artistry. The populace may submit feedback to us if they wish. This month's newsletter is being the creation of Lord Wilhelm Meis, and we look forward to seeing each candidate's newsletter. Please contact the Seneschal, Master Duncan Alastair MacRae, to apply!

War is coming! If you wish to camp with the Barony on the fields of Estrella War send your pre-registration information to Lady Zaahira de la Sara no later than **18 January**.

We hope everyone had a great and safe holiday. We look forward to seeing everyone again at practices and events!

In Service to the Stag Throne,
Herbert & Keterlyn
Baron & Baroness of Dragonsspine

Words from the Seneschal
Unto the great populace of Dragonsspine from your Seneschal, greetings!

As we pass into 2013 in the common era, I want to thank each and everyone of you. 2012 was a year of transition but with everyone's help we were able to make all the transitions with very few problems. Our events were very successful, and I want to thank all the autocrats and their crews for all their hard work.

Winter Feast is right around the corner and it is going to be a glorious event! For those of you with an interest in the arts and sciences, this winter has a bounty of A&S events, including Northern Outlands A&S Collegium this month and Queens Prize next month, as well as Kingdom A&S in the spring.

We are in need of bids for events this summer! I would love to see some type of camping event like last year's Champions which was so much fun. We are also open to bids for the fall as well. If you have an idea for an event but don't know where to start, contact me and we will find someone who can assist you in putting your event bid together and helping you run it. Remember if you don't submit bids and event ideas, we don't have any events to enjoy.

In Service,
Duncan
Dragonsspine Seneschal

This month in medieval history...

Jan. 2 533 – Mercurius becomes Pope John II, the first pope to adopt a new name upon elevation to the papacy.
Jan. 11 630 – Muhammad leads an army of 10,000 to conquer Mecca.
Jan. 27 661 – The Rashidun Caliphate ends with death of Ali (cousin and son-in-law to Muhammad).
Jan. 1 1001 – István, Grand Prince of the Hungarians, is named the first King of Hungary by Pope Sylvester II.
Jan. 11 1055 – Theodora is crowned Byzantine Empress upon the death of her husband, Emperor Constantine IX.
Jan. 6 1066 – Harold Godwinson, the last Anglo-Saxon king, is crowned King of England.
Jan. 9 1349 – About 600 Jews in Basel, Switzerland, believed to be the cause of the Black Death, are incinerated.
Jan. 17 1377 – Pope Gregory XI moves the Papacy back to Rome from Avignon.
Jan. 16 1412 – The Medici family is appointed official banker of the Papacy.
Jan. 3 1431 – Joan of Arc is handed over to Bishop Pierre Cauchon on charges of insubordination and heterodoxy.
Jan. 2 1492 – Muhammad XII of Granada – the last Moorish stronghold in Spain – surrenders to Ferdinand and Isabella.
Jan. 15 1493 – Christopher Columbus sets sail for Spain from Hispaniola, ending his first voyage to the New World.
Jan. 1 1502 – The present-day location of Rio de Janeiro is first explored by the Portuguese.
Jan. 14 1514 – Pope Leo X issues a papal bull against slavery.
Jan. 3 1521 – Pope Leo X issues a papal bull excommunicating Martin Luther.
Jan. 28 1521 – The Diet of Worms is convened, Emperor Charles V presiding.
Jan. 20 1523 – Christian II is forced to abdicate as King of Denmark and Norway in favor of his uncle Frederick.
Jan. 12 1528 – Gustav Vasa, liberator of Sweden from the Danish crown, is crowned king of Sweden.
Jan. 18 1535 – Founding of Lima, capital of Peru, by Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro.
Jan. 16 1547 – Ivan the Terrible is crowned as the first Tsar of All the Russias.
Jan. 25 1554 – Founding of city of São Paulo, Brazil.
Jan. 7 1558 – France retakes Calais, the last continental possession of England.
Jan. 15 1559 – Elizabeth I is crowned Queen of England.
Jan. 23 1570 – James Stewart, regent of Scotland, is killed in the first recorded assassination by firearm.
Jan. 11 1571 – Emperor Maximilian II grants Austrian nobility freedom of religion.
Jan. 16 1581 – The English Parliament outlaws Roman Catholicism.
Jan. 1 1600 – Scotland begins its year on January 1 instead of March 25.
Jan. 16 1605 – *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes is published in Madrid.
Jan. 31 1606 – Guy Fawkes is executed for the November 5th (1605) Gunpowder Plot against Parliament.
Information courtesy of Wikipedia and verified through various other sources.

Did you know...?

A series of heraldic abatements (marks of dishonour given for moral offenses) were posited by heraldic writers in the latter part of the 16th century, but none of these saw currency in actual heraldic practice. The practice of inverting an entire coat of arms for high treason, on the other hand, has been attested in several instances, and at least one other instance demonstrates the practice of altering a coat of arms for lesser treasonous acts. This was the case of Amerie de Pavie, who had been appointed Governor of Calais (in France) by King Edward III of England in 1347 after the successful English siege of the city (September 1346-August 1347). In 1348, Amerie conspired to sell the city to Sir Geoffrey de Charney, a French knight from nearby St. Omer, for 20,000 crowns. When Edward III learned of the bargain, he upbraided Amerie and brought an army to meet Sir Geoffrey's forces. After prevailing over Sir Geoffrey's failed siege of Calais on December 31st, 1348, Edward III transferred governance of Calais to John de Beauchamp and ordered two of Amerie's six stars removed from his arms in January 1349. Pursuivant of Arms John Guillim, writing in the early 17th century, added that Amery's arms were also inverted.

Sources:

Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles (1909). *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*. London: T.C. & E.C. Jack. pp. 72–3.
Froissart, John (1844). *The Chronicles of England, France and Spain*. London: William Smith. pp. 192-5.
Guillim, John (1611). "Section I Chapter VIII". *A Display of Heraldrie*. London: Printed by William Hall for Raphe Mab.
Henry, Robert (1788). *The History of Great Britain: From the First Invasion of It By the Romans Under Julius Caesar.* Volume VII (2nd ed.). London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell. pp. 242-5.
Parker, James (1894). "Abatements". *Parker's Heraldry*. Revised 2011 by Karl B. Wilcox. <http://karlwilcox.com/parker/>.
Woodcock, Thomas; Robinson, John Martin (1988). *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. p. 68.

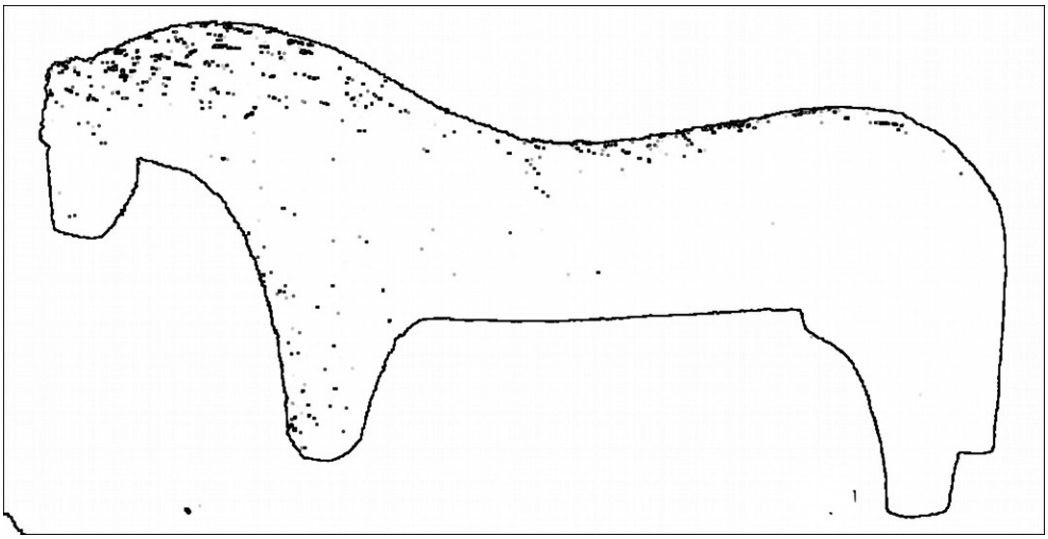
making a wooden toy viking horse

by Wilhelm Meis

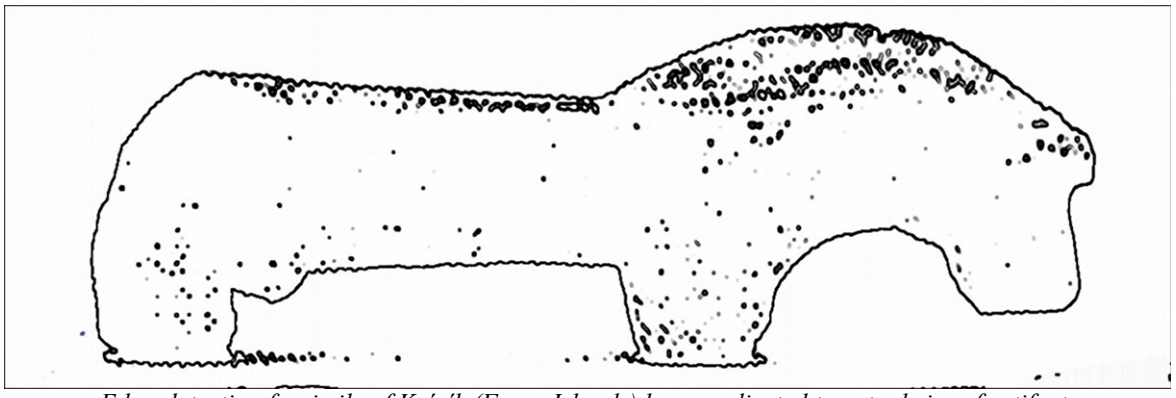
Simple wooden toy horses were widespread in Northern Europe during the Viking Age, with extant examples ranging from the Faroe Islands (situated about halfway between Oslo, Norway and Reykjavík, Iceland) to St. Petersburg, Russia. The modernly famous Dalecarlian horse from northern Sweden appears to be an invention of the 18th century, so I will focus on Viking Age wooden horses, specifically two examples that have survived virtually intact. These include one from Trondheim, Norway (Roesdahl & Wilson, catalogue no. 14), and one from Kvívík, Faroe Islands (catalogue no. 315, pictured on p. 58), which I will refer to as the Trondheim horse and the Kvívík horse. These are clearly intended for use by small children, given their lack of detail or complexity, and none of the extant pieces show any remnant of painting, suggesting that the natural wood grain was left showing. I argue that these wooden horses served as teething toys for infants, whether or not that was the original intent of their design, but small children are known to put things in their mouths and I think such a toy would invariably have ended up serving this purpose. **Please note that I make no claims or recommendations regarding the safety of using this or any wooden object as a teething toy for infants, and I encourage every parent to use their own judgment regarding child safety.**

First, I would like to address wood selection, which should be a primary concern for any toy liable to being chewed on by an infant. Roesdahl & Wilson describe the Trondheim specimen as fir, and others I have seen resemble pine to my eye. I think white pine would be an acceptable Northern European selection, due to its softness and relatively low splintering tendency, as would linden (known in the United States as basswood), which is a slower growing though relatively soft deciduous tree. I have used fir, selected for a relatively tight and straight grain structure, and also some from locally obtained aspen, which characteristically has a much smoother, more papery structure which I have found to be both softer feeling and less prone to splintering than fir. Perhaps the reason all extant toy horses appear to be carved from softwood (pine, fir and spruce) planks could result from sourcing these from ship building scraps. Viking Age ships were built using clinker construction, requiring long planks cut from radially split logs. Did shipwrights use some scraps cut from the ends of the strakes to carve these horses to sell for extra beer money? The answer to this question may not be provable, but it would explain a few things about the size and shape of the extant horses.

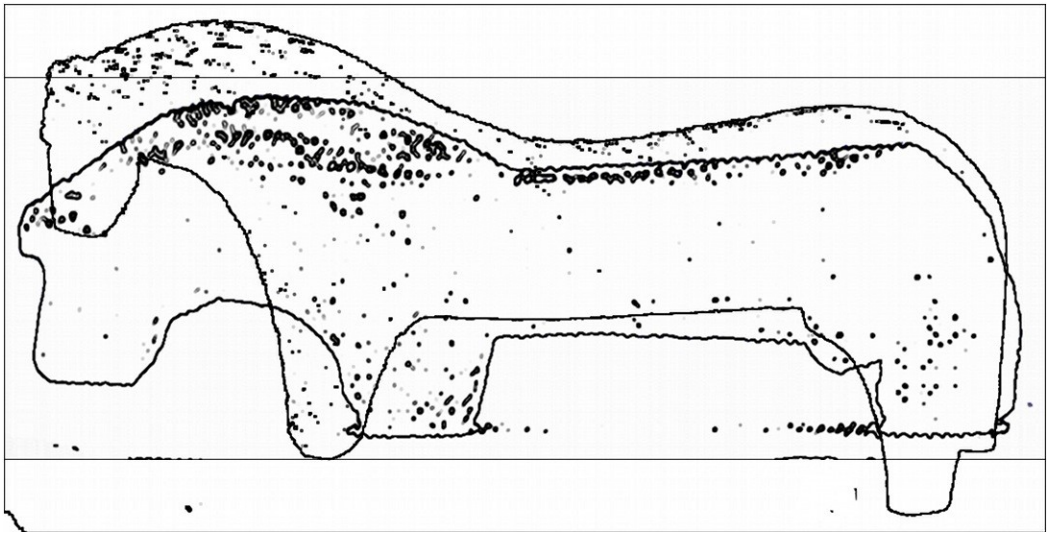
Roesdahl & Wilson tell us the Trondheim horse measures 127mm in length, so I was able to calculate that this specimen was approx. 58.6mm height at the neck (46.14% of length) and 53.7mm height at the rump (91.6% of max. height). Length of the Kvívík horse is given as 132mm, so I calculate that this specimen was approx. 45.6mm height at the neck (34.5% of length) and 37.5mm height at the rump (82.2% of max. height). Distance from breast to tail is 79.5% of overall length in the Trondheim horse and 69.1% of overall length in the Kvívík horse. To stay consistent with the sizes and proportions provided here, I overlaid outline images of these examples and visually estimated median values, then double checked the proportions of my sketch. My finished horse measures approx. 126mm in length, 46mm height at the neck (36.5% of length), 40mm height at the rump (87.0% of max. height), with a distance of 97mm from breast to tail (77.0% of overall length).



Edge-detection facsimile of Trondheim (Norway) horse, adjusted to actual size of artifact



Edge-detection facsimile of Kvívík (Faroe Islands) horse, adjusted to actual size of artifact



Composite image of overlaid facsimiles of Trondheim and Kvívík horses

I transferred my sketch to the wood by tracing the outline with a scratch awl and cut it out using a coping saw. Coping saws were used in the period and would have been the most likely choice for the craftsmen who made the Trondheim and Kvívík horses. The only other tools required for this project are a plane to shave the plank and a simple carving knife.

I have never seen these horses identified as teething toys, and it was not my first impression, but the more I studied them, it just made sense to me that these toys would have been of little interest to a child more than a few years old. Child development has not changed much, so infants in the 11th century, like infants today, would tend to put things in their mouth to taste them and chew on them, and wooden teething toys are known even today. Whether teething was this toy's primary purpose or not, I think any toy given to an infant would soon serve that purpose, and older children would be more interested in more complex toys or more athletic pursuits such as foot races and stick ball.

Works cited: Roesdahl, Else & Wilson, David M., eds. From Viking to Crusader: The Scandinavians and Europe 800-1200. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1992. ISBN 0-8478-1625-7.

Fair Use of Images: Fig. 1, 2 and 3: These derivative works show only the outlines of images published in Roesdahl & Wilson, catalogue no. 14 and p. 58. These show the size and proportions of historical artifacts, used here for educational purposes. Although the artifacts themselves are ancient, no photographs of these are in the Public Domain.
Fig. 4, 5 and 6: These photos are the author's own work, published by permission under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial license (CC BY-NC). See http://creativecommons.org/licenses/ for details.

Chivalry in the Middle Ages: The Song of Roland

By Wilhelm Meis

The Song of Roland is the earliest known work of literature to deal with themes of *chivalry* specifically, or as far as I know, any complex social code of ideal behavior. St. Augustine's *Confessiones*, written in the last decade of the 4th century, had extensive influence over the next several centuries of Christian literature, but it dealt with moral themes of sin and redemption in a very personal context. If anything, Augustine decried a dearth of social moral values, as he described falling in with others who were foolish, prideful, greedy, larcenous, and cruel to others. It would be difficult to sum up 700 years of literary history in a sentence, but I have not been able to find earlier examples of chivalric writing than *La Chanson de Roland*, which, though set in the late 8th century, was probably written in the late 11th or early 12th century. *Beowulf* was probably written before *Roland*, but according to the Saxon tradition, loyalties followed lines of kinship rather than fealty, and the difference between heroism and villainy is mostly a matter of perspective. The Anglo-Saxon heroic code evident in *Beowulf* was rather less complex than the chivalry of *Roland* and could be summed up as courage, strength, integrity and wits. Unfortunately little is known of European literature, apart from sacred texts and some histories written in Latin, until the epic, eddic and skaldic poetry of the 10th century.

To put *Roland* in perspective, we should look not only to literary history, but also to the political history of both the time in which the story is set and the time in which it was written. The setting is centered around the Battle of Roncevaux Pass in 778, late in Charlemagne's expedition into Al Andalus (Moorish Spain). This expedition occurred early in the Reconquista, or retaking of Spain from the Moors, which would turn out to be a struggle of greater duration than the Crusades in the Holy Lands. At the time *Roland* was likely written, Moorish control of the southern half of the Iberian Peninsula was still strong, several Popes in the interim had intervened with grants of collective indulgence, plying Christian knights to fight against the Moors rather than each other, and the build up to the First Crusade in the Levant was already underway. Some historians believe *Roland* was written in the early 12th century, after the First Crusade, citing some minor references made in *Roland*, though these could have been absent in the original story and added to later editions.

Little wonder, then, that one of the central themes of *The Song of Roland* is the pitting of the virtuous Christian Emperor Charlemagne against the treacherous “pagan” (i.e. Muslim) King Marsile. To add to the sense of Muslim treachery, it is while Charlemagne is returning home to Aix that the Muslims sneak up in the high mountain passes of the Pyrenees, attacking his rear guard from behind. Historians have since come to the consensus, however, that it was not in fact the Moors but the Vascones who sacked Charlemagne's rear guard, as they were resisting Frankish expansion as well as Moorish conquest. Prevalent themes of *The Song of Roland* include the struggle between the Christian Franks and the Muslim Moors; the virtues of honesty and loyalty and the sin of betrayal; cleavages of kinship, fealty and national identity; and the virtue of fraternal love. Women and romantic love are barely mentioned at all, and the social order depicted here is really limited to the militant and political world of the men of the Frankish aristocracy. We see the virtue and heroism of brave Roland (Governor of the Breton March and commander of Charlemagne's rear guard) and his beloved brother knights contrasted against the treachery of the Saracens (the Iberian Moors) as well as that of Roland's treasonous and cowardly godfather, Ganelon (also called Guenelun or Guenes). Apart from the treacherous Ganelon, the Franks are depicted as a virtuous Christian nation, united in fraternity and loyalty to Charlemagne, laying the foundation of the concept of French nationality.

Early in the story, Roland nominated Ganelon for the dangerous mission of carrying Charlemagne's message to Marsile, prompting the prideful Ganelon to swear vengeance against Roland, which turned to treason when Ganelon conspired with the Saracen knight Blancandrin to sack the Frankish rear guard. Blancandrin is regarded as “a pagan very wise” (Laisse III, line 1) and demonstrates that while pagans and saracens may, in the Christian view, be wise, they are not expected to be honest or true to their word. Christians, however, clearly are expected to be both honest and loyal, particularly those who have entered an oath of fealty. Ironically, it was disloyal Ganelon who said of Charlemagne, “better to die than leave his banneret” (Laisse XL, line 17). Ultimately Ganelon is discovered, found guilty by judicial duel, and gruesomely drawn and quartered by four stallions for his treason (Laisse CCLXXXIX), cementing honesty and loyalty as the central tenets of chivalry.

Join us again in March to discuss chivalry in early Arthurian tales. Suggested reading for this month: Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Book IX <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/Camelot/geofhkb.htm> Chrétien de Troyes: *Lancelot, or The Knight of the Cart* <http://omacl.org/Lancelot/>